

# Montana Post \* Volume 44, Number 3 \* Autumn 2006

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## From the Director

Richard Sims

This new Director of the Montana Historical Society, and newcomer to Montana, has been on the job six weeks as this is written. One can never quite be a Montanan, or a Texan, or an Arizonan, or a North Dakotan without being born in the state. Folks in Big Sky country often identify themselves as being a something-generation Montanan—third, fourth, or more. (If Montana's Indians identified themselves by the generation count, what would those numbers be? "I am from the Crow Nation, and I am a twenty-fifth generation Montanan.")

I am a fifth-generation Kentuckian, the latest in a long line of Kentuckians to head for Montana. Lewis and Clark had nine Kentucky boys in their party.

I've only just started to travel the state to meet the Society's friends and supporters, but I've already learned that Montanans are proudly aware of their family histories. Arizona—the state I recently departed—has six times the population of Montana, but five-fifths of those are newcomers. Montanans, because of their generational depth, know, and care passionately about, their state's history.

This widespread engagement in history is one of Montana's great hidden assets—and it will serve us well as we work to build a Society that matches Montanans' commitment to their collective past.

## In Memoriam

Historians across the state join friends, family members, and colleagues in mourning the death of the Society's longtime research historian Dave Walter on July 19, at age sixty-three. Walter joined the Society in 1979 as reference librarian, and later served as its research historian.



The breadth and importance of Dave's work are reflected in the awards he received: an honorary doctorate of humane letters from the University of Montana in 1994; the Governor's Humanities Award in 1998; the H.G. Merriam Award for contributions to Montana literature in 2001; and the Montana Historical Society Educators' Award in 2003. The Society's magazine, *Montana The Magazine of Western History*, will be publishing a series of tributes remembering Dave's many contributions in its fall 2006 issue.

The Society lost another good friend when ten-year volunteer Norma Heiman died on August 22 at the age of eighty-seven. Norma spent many hours at the Society giving tours of both the Homeland and the Mackay Gallery of Russell Art. Staff will particularly miss her willingness to offer tours tailored for children with special needs.

## Society to Open New Long-Term Exhibit

On September 22, the Society will unveil its newest long-term exhibit—*Neither Empty Nor Unknown: Montana at the Time of Lewis and Clark*. The exhibit launches the Society—the oldest historical organization west of the Mississippi—into the twenty-first century by offering the public a state-of-the-art museum experience.

The innovative, 4,600-square-foot exhibit focuses on dispelling the continuing myth that Lewis and Clark found a wasteland populated by simple hunter-gathers when they came here two hundred years ago. It uses re-created artifacts and several new major murals created primarily by Native American artists to show the thriving civilizations that lived in the land now known as



***A mannequin demonstrates a traditional fishtrap in the Society's new exhibit.***

Montana at the time of Lewis and Clark.

A Native American advisory panel of educators and members of tribal culture committees assisted in the early planning stages to help tell the story from the Indian perspective. Panel members and exhibit consultants represented Blackfeet, Assiniboiné, Little Shell Chippewa, Kootenai, Gros Ventre, Cheyenne, Salish, Crow, and Cree tribes.

Members of the advisory committee will be on hand for the gala exhibit opening on Thursday, September 21, which will feature a blessing ceremony, tours, and refreshments.

On Friday, September 22, the Society will welcome school groups and others for a wide range of activities and demonstrations, on topics from hunting to doll-making.

The celebration continues on Saturday, with free general admission to the museum, special tours, doll- and moccasin-making demonstrations, and performances by the Forsyth Community Choir. (For more details, see

<http://www.his.state.mt.us/museum/eventschedule.asp>.)

## Billings to Be Site of Thirty-third Annual Montana History Conference

"Our Place in the West: Views from the Yellowstone River Valley" is the title of the Society's thirty-third annual history conference, to be held in Billings on September 28-30.

The program will explore the region's colorful history and examine the characters, events, and episodes that put the magic in the "Magic City" and its neighboring communities up and down Montana's famed Yellowstone River.

Workshops for educators and historic preservation enthusiasts, a tour of Billings' historic Black Otter Trail, and a progressive museum dessert reception will kick off the conference on Thursday.

Friday and Saturday will offer a packed program featuring topics from the region's earliest history (the Billings bison trap) to contemporary issues (coalbed methane development). A sampling of speakers includes Crow ethnobotanist Alma Hogan Snell (describing the Crow philosophy of healing); medical historian Pierce Mullen (examining the history of rabies); archaeologist Steve Aaberg (discussing the second Crow Agency); photographer Kristi Hager (looking at early Montana photographer Evelyn Cameron); transportation historians John and Alice Ridge (exploring the Yellowstone Trail); and broadcasting veteran Vic Miller (talking about the history of Billings radio and television).

Keynote speaker William Lang, professor of history at Portland State University, will offer his thoughts on the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. Friday's luncheon speaker, journalism professor Dennis Swibold, will share strange and funny Montana newspaper lore, and Saturday's luncheon

speaker, Western Heritage Center curator Kevin Kooistra-Manning, will discuss the contrasting Montana experiences of Frederick and Parmly Billings.

On Saturday afternoon, attendees will have a chance to garner their own views of the valley with tours to Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pompey's Pillar and Fort Remon, and Yellowstone Valley agricultural sites (including the Huntley Project).

For more information or to register, visit [www.montanahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org) and click on the History Conference logo, or call Linda Wruck at 406-444-4794.

## Montana Historical Society Awards Funds for Heritage Tourism

The Montana Historical Society will distribute \$35,300 among Fort Benton, Virginia City, Red Lodge, and Missoula. These "Preserve America" communities will use the funds to support a variety of heritage tourism projects that recognize, designate, and protect local cultural resources.

Fort Benton will spend \$11,100 to improve interpretive signs on the Hands of Harvest trail that will direct visitors to over a hundred farms, bed and breakfasts, ranches, artist studios, galleries, and local restaurants along five self-guided loop tours in rural north-central Montana. Virginia City plans to invest \$9,100 in a marketing campaign using vintage-looking signs, placemats, and brochures to encourage visitors on their way to other Big Sky tourist spots to take a turn toward Alder Gulch.

Red Lodge will utilize \$10,100 to refine and update the survey of their historic downtown and research their region's Finnish architecture.

Missoula will receive \$5,000 to update their walking tour map and website to feature facts about historic building materials used in those downtown buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



A second round of "Preserve America" grants is planned with a November 1 deadline. To obtain an application and program guidelines, please contact Melisa Kaiser Synness at [mkaisersynness@mt.gov](mailto:mkaisersynness@mt.gov). To learn how a community can obtain the Preserve America designation, go to: [www.preserveamerica.gov](http://www.preserveamerica.gov).

*Virginia City is one of four Preserve America communities to receive money to promote heritage tourism.*

## Thomas C. Power Finding Aid Now On-Line

Researchers can now discover the depth and breadth of the T. C. Power collection without traveling to Helena. Montana's premiere nineteenth-century businessman, Power was involved in virtually every aspect of Montana's economy from steamboats, to general mercantile stores, to agricultural implement sales, to sheep ranches, to banks, to gold mines. He also served one term (1891-1897) as Montana senator and was a delegate to the 1884 Constitutional Convention.

In 1969 the Tobin family donated a massive collection (nearly 530 boxes) of T. C. Power's personal, political, and business papers to the Society. Researchers have used the collection to examine topics as varied as Montana-Canada economic relations, steamboat traffic on the Missouri, fur trading, and liquor trafficking.

Until recently, a typed inventory has been the only guide to the collection. This summer, the Society uploaded the entire inventory to the Northwest Digital Archives on the internet at <http://nwda-db.wsulibs.wsu.edu>. Researchers should be forewarned, however, that because of its immense size, the finding aid takes time to load. And, of course, looking at any actual document from the collection still requires a visit to the archives.

The Power collection is the largest, but not the only inventory now electronically accessible. The Society has over four hundred collections described in detail on the Northwest Digital Archives site. Two of the Society's most recent additions to the Northwest Digital Archives database are inventories for the Kessler Family Photograph Collection and the Burton K. Wheeler Photograph

Collection. Additional inventories for photograph and archival collections will be posted over the next few months.

## MHS Press Book Wins National Award

The American Association for State and Local History recently named *Beyond Spirit Tailings: Montana's Mysteries, Ghosts, and Haunted Places* a winner of their prestigious Award of Merit.



The national organization established the award to encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of state and local history throughout the United States.

Society Interpretive Historian Ellen Baumler wrote the book, published in 2005 by the Montana Historical Society Press. It is a follow-up to her earlier book, *Spirit Tailings: Ghost Tales from Virginia City, Butte, and Helena*. Presenting these ghost stories has allowed her to introduce the state's history to a broad audience. The books are among the Montana Historical Society Press's most popular publications.

Ellen will travel to Phoenix, Arizona, to receive the award on September 16. She will also give a multi-media presentation and recount several spooky tales at the Festival of the Book in Missoula on September 30. For more information about the Award of Merit and Ellen's work, visit our website <http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.com/pub/press/beyond.asp>.

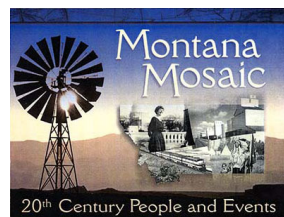
## History Happenings



The **monumental-size bronze bas relief**, *We Proceeded On*, is currently being cast at Kalispell Art Casting in Kalispell, Montana. The artwork, by sculptor Eugene Daub, is the first new mural added to the capitol since 1912. It will be transported to Helena and installed in the capitol's senate chamber in October. A dedication ceremony is being planned for later this year. All of the money to finance this project, approximately \$200,000 so far, has been raised through sales of replica maquettes and bronze

and silver medallions. Only 35 limited-edition bronze replicas are still available for purchase at \$3,500. Approximately 300 limited-edition bronze medallions are available at \$80. Call the Society at 406-444-2694 if you are interested in purchasing a piece of Montana history in the making.

**Zoe Ann Stoltz** has joined the Society as the Research Center's newest **reference historian**. Stoltz will receive a master's degree in history from the University of Montana this year. Stoltz comes to the Society with a broad experience in research, education, and community service. Among other positions, she has worked as a park ranger and interpreter at the Libby Dam Visitor's Center and as a community liaison for asbestos remediation in Libby.



The Office of Public Instruction is making the DVD **Montana Mosaic: 20th-Century People and Events** available as streaming video. The Society received a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to create the DVD, which includes twelve, fifteen-minute segments, or chapters, on topics ranging from Indian boarding schools to Montana's response to global conflict. The Society's education office is mailing copies of the DVD to every middle school and high school library in the state at no cost. But anyone who is interested in viewing the DVD can download it through the Society's website at <http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org/education/MontanaMosaic.asp>.

The State Historic Preservation Office received a **\$10,000 grant** from the Montana Land Title Association Foundation to support owners who need help preparing nominations of properties for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This is the third such contribution made by the MLTA to the Society's National Register Heritage Property Fund.

The fall issue of **Montana The Magazine of Western History** will include articles on Russian exploration in the West, Montana war brides, historic preservation in the Southwest, and lessons learned from the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. Look for your issue in the mail, or call 1-800-243-9900 to subscribe.

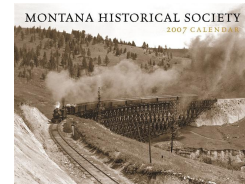
With funds received from a \$16,700 Cultural and Aesthetic Grant awarded in 2005, the Prairie County Museum and the Montana Historical Society (MHS) Photograph Archives recently contracted with Jennifer Jeffries Thompson to identify **2,000 Evelyn Cameron negatives** in the Society's collection. Thompson will gather information about Cameron's photographs by conferring with people in Prairie County and by examining Cameron's diaries and vintage negative sleeves and prints. In the second phase of the grant, a cataloger will use the information Thompson assembled to catalog some Cameron photographs on the MHS Research Center's publicly accessible, on-line catalog. Then, people all over the world will be able to locate Cameron's images on the web to better appreciate the rich cultural heritage of eastern Montana.



*Evelyn J. Cameron standing on her horse, Jim. Self-portrait.  
MHS Photo Archives*

Society Archivist Rich Aarstad travels to Forsyth for the Custer Country annual meeting. He will present a talk, **1810: The Year of Living Dangerously**, about the Blackfoot response to American fur traders on the Upper Missouri River.

The **2007 MHS calendar** has arrived. Featuring nearly twenty historic transportation photographs from the MHS photograph archives, this beautiful, black-and-white calendar is one of several benefits of membership in the Montana Historical Society. Visit [www.montanahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org) or call 1-800-243-9900 for more information about becoming a member.



The Office of Public Instruction and the Society's Education Office are partnering to create additional copies of two of the Society's popular **history footlockers**: the "Montana Indian Stories Literature Kit" and "To Learn a New Way." "Montana Indian Stories Literature Kit" offers a taste of Montana Indian storytelling with class sets of seven Indian Reading Series titles and accompanying animal puppets and lesson plans. "To Learn a New Way" explores the late 1800s and early 1900s, when Montana Indians were moved to reservations and experienced allotment and boarding schools—all of which resulted in dramatic changes in their lands, languages, and ways of life. These and other footlockers are available to educators through the Montana Historical Society. For a full list of footlockers—which explore topics from pre-history to World War II—visit <http://montanahistoricalsociety.org/education/footlocker/default.asp>.



*Ulm Ranch. Oil on canvas by Josh Elliott.*

The winner of this year's **Rendezvous Legacy Award** purchase prize was Josh Elliott's *Ulm Ranch*. The oil on canvas measures 15 by 30 inches. The award is presented every year at the Western Rendezvous of Art—and the winning piece is added to the Montana Historical Society's permanent art collection.

The MHS Research Center is adding **digital content** to its on-line catalog as part of a cooperative project with OCLC (the Online Computer Library Center). Researchers will now be able to search for materials and, if an image exists, be taken directly to a link where they can view the photograph, letter, or map. To see an example, search for "Hat X Cow Camp" on the catalog at <http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org/research/library/onlinecatalogs.asp> and click on the "electronic access" link. The Research Center will be adding additional images throughout the remaining four months of this project.



This fall the Montana Historical Society Press will release ***Copper Chorus: Mining, Politics, and the Montana Press, 1889-1959***. In this history of Montana newspapers, University of Montana journalism professor Dennis Swibold explores the timeless topic of corporate control over the news. Such "captive" journalism was hardly unique to Montana, but in terms of its longevity, reach, and reputation, no industrial entity in any other state matched the Anaconda Company's hold over Montana's press. In September Swibold will speak about the book at both the Montana History Conference and the Montana Festival of the Book.

Philadelphia sculptor Edward J. Van Landeghem is the artist who created **the statue that stands atop the Montana state capitol dome**. And he named that statue—long known as *Lady Liberty—Montana*. The names of the artist and the piece of artwork were lost at the close of the nineteenth century after the first capitol commission destroyed their records amidst charges of fraud. The information came to light after the artist's granddaughter, Alice Nagle of Hatfield, Pennsylvania, contacted the society inquiring about the status of the sculpture. Curator of Art Kirby Lambert announced the discovery on the capitol steps at a press conference widely covered by Montana media.



*The nearly completed "Montana" in the artist's Philadelphia studio, ca. 1900.  
Photo courtesy of Alice Van Landeghem Nagle.*

## Calendar

Unless otherwise noted, all of the programs are **free, open to the public**, at the Montana Historical Society, 225 N. Roberts.

**September 14, 1:00 p.m.: Dedication Ceremony for the Reinstallation of a Memorial Plaque for former Gov. Donald Nutter.** The plaque honoring Gov. Nutter, who died in a 1962 plane crash while in office, will be reinstalled on the grounds of the State Capitol Building after an absence of more than twenty years during a public ceremony.

**September 16, 12:30 p.m.: Goldpans, Guns, & Grit: Diamond City from Territorial Gold Rush to Montana Ghost Town.** Kelly Flynn, who operates his family ranch in the Shadow of Diamond City and nearby Confederate Gulch, will present a free public program on one of the richest strikes in Montana territorial history. A book signing will follow the talk, which is based on Flynn's book of the same title.

**September 21, 6:00 p.m.: Neither Empty Nor Unknown: Montana at the Time of Lewis and Clark.** Join us for the grand opening of this 4,600-square-foot, permanent exhibit exploring the people, flora, and fauna of 1805 Montana. The celebration will begin with a blessing ceremony,

followed by an honor ceremony by the Old Medicine Singers. The doors to the exhibit open at 6:30 p.m. Tour guides will be on hand to introduce visitors to the exhibit's many interactive activities.

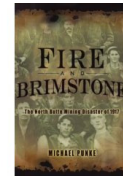
**September 22, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.: American Indian Heritage Day.** The Society continues to celebrate the opening of its newest exhibit, *Neither Empty nor Unknown: Montana at the Time of Lewis and Clark*, with children's activities focusing on Native American life on the Plains before 1805. Visitors are invited to watch Indian doll-making, stone boiling, flint-knapping, and fire-making. There will also be opportunities to throw an atlatl (an early hunting tool), create rock art, design an exploit robe, and play traditional Plains Indian games. Call 406-444-4789 for reservations.

**September 23, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.: Free Admission to the Society.** Come see the new exhibit, *Neither Empty Nor Unknown*, and learn about the Missouri River ecosystem and tribal life in 1805. Artisans will be on hand making moccasins and Indian dolls, and the Forsyth Community Choir will perform an hour-long original composition, *Look to the Mountains: A Lewis & Clark Cantata* at 1:00 p.m. and again at 3:00 p.m.

**September 28, 6:30 p.m.: Pages in History Book Forum: *This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind*** by Ivan Doig. MHS employee and retired teacher Julie Saylor will lead the discussion of this book, chosen by the Montana Committee for the Humanities for One Book Montana in 2006. A limited number of copies of this book are available for short-term loan. Contact the facilitator, Julie Saylor, at 406-444-4789 to borrow a copy.

**October 5, 6:30 p.m.: The Chinese Experience in Montana.** Carroll College history professor Robert Swartout will discuss the Chinese experience in Montana and the issues these immigrants faced in making a new life in a foreign place.

**October 7, 12:30 p.m.: Fire and Brimstone: The North Butte Mining Disaster of 1917.** Join author Michael Punke for a PowerPoint presentation based on his new book, followed by refreshments and a book signing.



**October 12, 6:30 p.m.: Montana Mosaic: 20th-Century People and Events.** The Society's Education Officer, Linda Wruck, will demonstrate the Society's newest educational product: the *Montana Mosaic: 20th-Century People and Events* DVD and its companion website. Both DVD and website contain short documentaries revealing important, but often overlooked aspects of Montana's twentieth-century history.

**October 13, Noon: Helena Festival of the Book Lecture.** The Montana Historical Society is a co-sponsor for novelist Karen Fisher, *A Sudden Country*, who joins us to discuss "The Uses of History in Contemporary Fiction."



**October 14, 12:30 p.m.: One Night in a Bad Inn.** Butte native Christy Leskovar will talk about her new book of the same title, which features a character modeled after Anne McDonnell, who served as a librarian at the Montana Historical Society in the 1920s and 1930s.

**October 19, 6:30 p.m.: Gallery Tour: *Neither Empty nor Unknown: Montana at the Time of Lewis and Clark*.** Visit our newest exhibit and see how Great Plains Indians lived at the time of Lewis and Clark, circa 1805.

**October 26, 6:30 p.m.: Pages in History Book Forum: *The Divide War: Montana's Golden Treasure*** by Pat Kearney. Helena *Independent Record* sports writer Curt Synness will lead the discussion on this book, which provides a year-by-year look at the football rivalry between the University of Montana and Montana State University.

*November 2, 6:30 p.m. To Be Announced*

*November 9, 6:30 p.m.: **Snowmachines in the Gardens: Contrasting Snowmobile Histories in Glacier and Yellowstone Parks.*** Dr. Mike Yochim of the National Park Service investigates the controversy between special interest groups and general public over the use of snowmobiles in the parks and the region's winter economy.

*November 16, 6:30 p.m.: **Camp Rimini.*** Montana Historical Society Research Center staff Zoe Ann Stoltz and Karen Bjork share records from the archives that tell the story of Camp Rimini and its role during World War II.

*November 30, 6:30 p.m.: **Pages in History Book Forum: Indian Creek Chronicles: A Winter Alone in the Wilderness*** by Pete Fromm. MHS Curator of Art Kirby Lambert will lead the discussion on Fromm's story of living the life of a mountain man (actually guarding salmon eggs) for seven months, alone in the winter isolation of Idaho's Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.

## **Conferences and Workshops**

*September 28-30: **Our Place in the West: Views from the Yellowstone River Valley**,* the Thirty-third Annual History Conference, Billings. Contact Linda Wruck at 406-444-4794 or [lwruck@mt.gov](mailto:lwruck@mt.gov) for information.

## **MHS Press Authors on the Road**

Interpretive Historian Ellen Baumlert will tell historical ghost tales based on work conducted for *Spirit Tailings* and *Beyond Spirit Tailings*, both published by the Montana Historical Society Press. With the help of funding from the Montana Committee for the Humanities Speaker's Bureau, she will appear at the following venues this fall:

*October 3, 7:00 p.m.:* Lewis and Clark Caverns

*October 18, 5:30 p.m.:* Belgrade Library, Belgrade

*October 19, Noon:* Western Heritage Center, Main Gallery, Billings

*October 19, 7:00 p.m.:* School House History and Art Center, Colstrip

*October 22, 7:00 p.m.:* Daniels County Library, Scobey

*October 23, 7:00 p.m.:* Friends of the Sheridan County Library, Sheridan County Courthouse, Plentywood

## **Hours**

### **Montana's Museum**

*Through Sept. 30:* Mondays-Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Thursday evenings until 8:00 p.m.

*Oct. 1 through Dec. 31:* Tuesdays-Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Thursday evenings until 8:00 p.m.

Closed holidays. \$5.00 per adult, \$1.00 per student, \$12.00 per family.

### **Museum Store**

*Through Sept. 30:* Mondays-Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

*Oct. 1 through Dec. 31:* Tuesdays-Saturdays, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Closed holidays. No admission fee.

### **Research Center**

*Library and Archives:* Tuesdays-Fridays, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
Closed Sundays, Mondays, and holiday weekends. No admission fee.

*Photograph Archives:* Tuesdays-Fridays, 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Closed weekends, Mondays, and holidays. No admission fee.

### **Capitol Guided Tours**

*Through Sept. 30:* Mondays-Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.; last tour begins at 2:00 p.m.  
Sundays, 12:00-4:00 p.m.; last tour begins at 3:00 p.m.

*Oct. 1 through Dec. 31:* Saturdays only, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.; last tour begins at 3:00 p.m.

Closed holidays. Self-guided tour brochures available upon request at the security desk on the first floor. Groups call 406-444-4789 for reservations.

### **Original Governor's Mansion**

*Through Sept. 30:* Tuesdays-Saturdays, 12:00-4:00 p.m. Tours begin on the hour; last tour begins at 3:00 p.m.

*Oct. 1 through Dec. 31:* Saturdays only, 12:00-4:00 p.m. Tours begin on the hour; last tour begins at 3:00 p.m.

Closed holidays. \$4 per adult, \$1 per student, \$10 per family. Groups call 406-444-4789 for reservations.